Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA:ALATHERTON, JR:BDF
APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON, JR
S/S-SGOLDSMITH
----------050320Z 007799 /12
O 050258Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 102152

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, US

SUBJECT: PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH ATHERTON

1. AMBASSADOR YAQUB KHAN CALLED AT HIS REQUEST ON ATHERTON MORNING OF MAY 4. AMBASSADOR SAID HE HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO CONVEY TO DEPARTMENT POINTS WHICH AGHA SHAHI HAD EARLIER GIVEN TO CONSTABLE. HE THEN MADE PRESENTATION WHICH CLOSELY FOLLOWED REPORT OF AGHA SHAHI'S REMARKS REPORTED IN ISLAMABAD 4352. AMBASSADOR ADDED THE FOLLOWING WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "BRIEFING POINTS" IN HIS INSTRUCTIONS: THE OPPOSITION HAD ATTEMPTED TO SEIZE POWER BY FORCE WHICH HAD NOT WORKED. THEY HAD THEN SOUGHT TO CREATE WIDESPREAD DISORDERS, INCLUDING WITHIN THE PPP, AND TO SUBVERT THE ARMED FORCES. THIS ALSO HAD NOT WORKED.

2. IN FOLLOW-ON DISCUSSION, ATHERTON SAID HE MUST REITERATE THAT THERE WAS NO BASIS FOR CHARGES OF U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE OPPOSITION. YAQUB KHAN REPLIED THAT HE WAS UNDER INSTRUC-
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TIONS NEITHER TO ADD NOR TO SUBTRACT FROM PRIME MINISTER'S APRIL 28 SPEECH. IN HIS PERSONAL VIEW, IT WAS NOT A CASE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S NOT ACCEPTING THE WORD OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, BUT RATHER A SUSPICION THAT OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE USG WERE RESPONSIBLE WHICH DEPARTMENT NOT AWARE OF. ATHERTON REPLIED THAT IT WAS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THIS ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIVITIES

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WE HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH. IN THIS CONNECTION, ATHERTON SAID HE WANTED TO REITERATE THE REQUEST THAT HAD BEEN CONVEYED TO AGHA SHAHI BY CHARGE THAT, IF GOP HAD EVIDENCE IT CLAIMED IT HAD TO SUPPORT ITS ALLEGATIONS, THIS SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO US.

3. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, ATHERTON SAID WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT LONG-RUN FUTURE OF U.S.-PAKISTANI RELATIONS AND, FOR SAKE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING THOSE RELATIONS, HAD BEEN RESPONDING WITH RESTRAINT. OUR CONCERN WAS THAT, IF PUBLIC ATTACKS ON US CONTINUED; FORCES WOULD BE SET IN MOTION--E.G., IN PUBLIC OPINION AND CONGRESS--WHICH COULD BECOME IRREVERSIBLE AND DO PERMANENT DAMAGE TO OUR RELATIONSHIP. YAQUB KHAN AGREED ON NEED TO LOOK TO THE FUTURE AND URGED UNDERSTANDING OF BHUTTO'S DIFFICULT DOMESTIC SITUATION.

4. LATER IN DAY, YAQUB KHAN CALLED TO SAY THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO DRAW OUT ATTENTION TO GOP'S CONCERN ABOUT RECENT TENDENTIOUS VOICE OF AMERICA BROADCASTS ABOUT PAKISTAN WHICH HAD BEEN UNFRIENDLY AND EVEN HOSTILE AND HAD NOT PRESENTED BALANCED PICTURE. VANCE

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